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ABSTRACT

Taking as its motto "Language Arts includes the integrated communication processes of listening, reading, representing, talking, viewing, and writing," this curriculum framework serves as the foundation for the development of a new assessment system for New Hampshire. The framework will help practitioners monitor the quality of learning and provide information about student progress to parents, teachers, administrators, other decision makers, and the general public through the data generated within the new assessment system. After an introduction and vision statement, the framework delineates "Broad Goals and Performance Outcomes," encompassing effective communication, creative and critical thinking, and lifelong learning. Under part of the framework, performance indicators in language arts (reading, writing, talking, and listening/viewing) are also listed. (Contains 23 references.) (TB)

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LANGUAGE ARTS CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

Language Arts includes the integrated communication processes of listening, reading, representing, talking, viewing, and writing.

Phase 1: Through End of Grade Three

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INTRODUCTION

Language is the primary means of human communication. It involves the complex, active, and integrated processes of creating, deriving, and conveying meaning. All forms of communication are valuable. In order for individuals to effectively communicate, certain language skills and attitudes must be developed in the areas of **listening, reading, representing, talking, viewing, and writing**. Furthermore, the ability to enhance and critique meaning requires the application of various thinking processes. Thinking and communicating effectively are life-long skills that enable individuals to experience success across the school curriculum and to work independently and cooperatively as contributing members in our democratic society and the global economy.

This framework will serve as the foundation for the development of a new assessment system to monitor the quality of learning and provide information about student progress to parents, teachers, administrators, other decision makers, and the general public. As stated in *A Framework for the New Hampshire Assessment Plan* (Concord, NH: State Board and Department of Education, January, 1992) "state-wide assessment is but one component of a complete assessment system." As envisioned by the Assessment Steering Committee, the developers of this plan, a complete assessment system will include both formative and summative components. That is, both the state and local districts will be actively engaged in assessing common goals and outcomes. The state will select certain performance outcomes from this *Language Arts Curriculum Framework: Through End of Grade Three* and assess them. In addition, local districts will be encouraged to complement the state program through a locally-designed process. This new assessment system will generate data which can be used:

- o at the student level, by students and parents, to recognize progress over time
- o at the classroom level, to monitor individual student progress and to enhance learning;
- o at the district level, to measure school and district-wide progress toward meeting goals and outcomes, to revise curriculum, to design inservice education programs, and to improve instruction;
- o at the college level, to improve the quality of teacher training programs;
- o at the state level, to measure progress toward the attainment of goals and outcomes from this framework, and to report the results to the citizens of New Hampshire;
- o at the state level, to target services to schools, improve existing programs, develop new initiatives, and revise standards;
- o at all levels, to provide correlation with national goals and a measure of accountability.

The broad performance outcomes and more specific performance indicators identified in this framework will guide state and local implementation teams as they work with assessment experts to develop and validate assessment items. The outcomes will also assist educators, parents, state and community leaders, and citizens in their efforts to improve curriculum and the quality of instruction.

Frameworks through the end of grade three have been developed concurrently in both language arts and mathematics. In the future, these frameworks will be expanded to include outcomes through the end of grades six and ten. In addition, new frameworks will be developed in the areas of science, history, and geography through the end of grades six and ten. The ultimate goal of this process is instructional improvement through the implementation of a systematic, outcome-based approach for promoting student achievement and school performance, one which will better prepare students for life and work in the 21st Century.

VISION STATEMENT

Learning language,
learning about language,
learning through language

enables individuals
to acquire, use, and expand
knowledge, skills, and ideas
in order to become

life-long learners,
critical and creative thinkers,
and effective communicators.

BROAD GOALS AND PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES

Effective Communication

All New Hampshire schools will provide students with the opportunity to develop the knowledge, skills, and processes necessary for **effective communication** through the interrelated use of **reading, writing, listening, talking, viewing, and representing** (non-print interpretations of language and literature).

Performance Outcomes:

1. Students will demonstrate an increasing ability to **communicate for specific purposes**. This includes the ability to:
 - * express feelings and opinions
 - * identify, define, and solve problems
 - * exchange ideas and knowledge
 - * request information
 - * initiate and follow directions
 - * respond to language/literature through a variety of forms (e.g. drama, music, writing, illustration, film)
2. Students will demonstrate an increasing ability to **communicate with clarity and accuracy**. This includes the ability to:
 - * use appropriate conventions (handwriting, spelling, usage, punctuation, capitalization, format)
 - * organize ideas to show coherence, unity, and logical relationships
 - * choose appropriate forms for specific audiences
 - * use proof-reading and editing strategies
 - * use technology as a communication tool (e.g. computers, visual aids, mass media)
3. Students will demonstrate an increasing ability to **generate, explore, organize, and extend ideas and information**. This includes the ability to:
 - * identify what is known and unknown before engaging in language activities (e.g. establish purpose, generate questions, brainstorm, predict, discuss, identify specialized vocabulary)
 - * link new knowledge to what is known
 - * expand and support ideas with detail

4. Students will demonstrate an increasing ability to **use language to examine and construct meaning**. This includes the ability to:
- * form an initial understanding
 - * extend initial impressions to develop more complex understandings
 - * compare and use information presented in various forms (e.g. maps, charts, graphs, illustrations, descriptions, narratives)
 - * employ a variety of forms to express ideas and to create meaning
 - * convert knowledge presented in one form into a different form
 - * use a varied vocabulary
 - * integrate new knowledge with prior knowledge
5. Students will demonstrate an increasing ability to **apply learning strategies and processes**. This includes the ability to:
- * make use of prior knowledge before beginning a project or activity
 - * predict and confirm content
 - * generate questions about content
 - * understand information presented in different forms
 - * summarize the main ideas from material presented in various forms
 - * identify information needed and develop a strategy to find it
 - * use self-help strategies (e.g. re-reading, reading aloud, varying rate of reading, monitoring comprehension)
 - * use and integrate the language-cuing systems to ensure meaning, specifically
 - semantics (context, meaning of language through words, structure of words)
 - syntactics (grammatical structure of language, relationships of words, sentences, and paragraphs within a coherent piece of writing)
 - graphophonics (sound/symbol relationships, relationships between sounds, relationships between written and oral language)
6. Students will demonstrate an increasing ability to **attain knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of a wide variety of literary genres and media forms**. This includes the ability to:
- * identify, understand, and respond to various modes of expression representing various times and peoples (e.g. narrative, poetic, expository, expressive, dramatic)
 - * select and use various modes of expression

Creative and Critical Thinking

All New Hampshire schools will provide students with the opportunity to develop **creative and critical thinking** processes within the context of language, literature, and media.

Performance Outcomes:

1. Students will demonstrate an increasing ability to **take an idea or information and present it in a new way or through a different medium**. This includes the ability to:
 - * use resources (e.g. films, magazines, interviews, content-specific books)
 - * use a variety of methods to organize and present ideas
 - * summarize, compare, and contrast information and ideas
 - * experiment with unfamiliar communication strategies
2. Students will demonstrate an increasing ability to **make predictions about outcomes, organization, and authors' purpose**. This includes the ability to:
 - * speculate on what might happen next or in the future
 - * offer an estimate or an opinion from a different perspective
3. Students will demonstrate an increasing ability to **use a variety of problem-solving strategies**. This includes the ability to:
 - * identify problems
 - * seek help when needed
 - * simplify and reorganize a task
 - * hypothesize
 - * analyze and evaluate
 - * develop practical strategies and be flexible in their use
4. Students will demonstrate an increasing ability to **develop a critical stance by formulating, expressing, and/or using criteria to evaluate a process or a product**. This includes the ability to:
 - * recognize the *need* to redraft
 - * recognize the *need* to revise for content, accuracy, and clarity
 - * recognize the *need* to edit for conventions (spelling, punctuation, grammar, capitalization)
 - * develop evaluation criteria and make judgements
 - * understand the process of and respond to self assessment
 - * compare and contrast one's own work over time

Life-Long Learning

All New Hampshire schools will provide students with the opportunity to use language to develop the wide variety of strategies necessary for **life-long learning**, including the attributes of motivation, curiosity, independence, and interdependence.

Performance Outcomes:

1. Students will demonstrate an increasing ability to **understand the significance and function of language in their own lives**. This includes the ability to:
 - * connect knowledge presented with their own background
 - * draw inferences from context and relate them to their own experiences
 - * understand and respond in personal ways to ideas, attitudes, and feelings expressed
 - * engage in language activities that are functional in everyday life
 - * demonstrate positive attitudes toward language (e.g. reading and listening for enjoyment, choosing to write, participate willingly in discussions)
2. Students will demonstrate an increasing ability to **learn independently**. This includes the ability to:
 - * work alone on an activity or project
 - * initiate language activities including the revision of a project
 - * take pride in their own products and understandings
 - * view mistakes as an opportunity for learning
 - * assess the quality of their own work
 - * take responsibility for their own learning including planning, organizing, and completing tasks
 - * adapt to new situations
 - * set goals for continued learning
3. Students will demonstrate an increasing ability to **work cooperatively**. This includes the ability to:
 - * contribute to formal and informal discussions
 - * choose another student to work with on an activity or project
 - * collaborate with several others on a project
 - * listen respectfully
 - * work in a group to plan, organize, and complete tasks (e.g. serve as a team leader or group participant, follow directions, resolve conflicts)

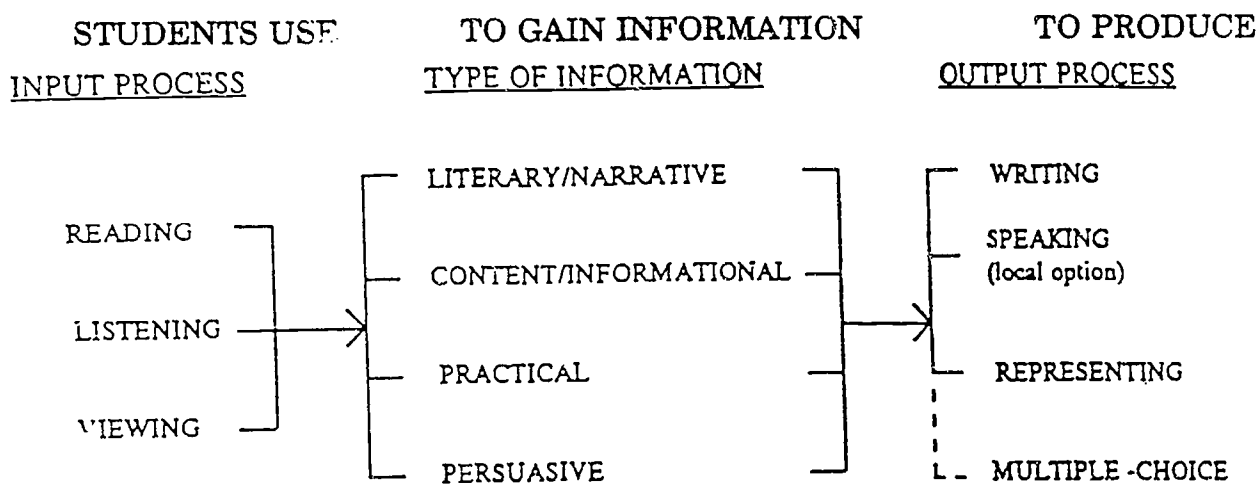
4. Students will demonstrate an increasing ability to **appreciate the universality of human experience and gain a better appreciation of themselves and others**. This includes the ability to:

- * understand self as a part of a democratic society
- * understand elements of character and citizenship through literature and media (e.g. self respect, respect for others, integrity, human worth, responsibility to self and others)
- * recognize their own and other points of view
- * recognize common/different events and experiences in literature and media
- * recognize the unique elements of individual experience
- * express feelings and opinions in response to literature and media

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Stated simply, we want students to read with understanding, write clearly, listen with understanding, talk articulately and effectively, view thoughtfully, and be able to represent ideas in forms other than words. The Language Arts Curriculum Framework was written to guide school districts as they develop instructional programs for teaching and learning basic communication skills. It was also designed to serve as the foundation of a new state assessment system. To assess student learning in terms of the performance outcomes of the Language Arts Curriculum Framework, it is necessary to give students real reading, listening, viewing, writing, talking, and representing tasks.

The schematic below shows how performance outcomes and means of communication are interrelated.



Language Arts may be assessed by a variety of means. Among these are writing a short response to a question, completing a multiple-choice item, writing a more extensive response to a question or prompt, drawing a diagram, speaking in response to reading, listening, or viewing, and teacher observation.

The following Performance Indicators are presented to guide the development of an assessment system at both the state and local levels. As students progress, they will be able to apply these skills to increasingly complex and lengthy materials.

Reading Proficiency

Proficient reading is reading with understanding. The *Reading Framework for the 1992 National Assessment of Educational Progress* (page 9) states that "Good readers

- a. Possess positive habits and attitudes about reading;
- b. Read with enough fluency so that they can focus on the meaning of what they read;
- c. Use what they already know to understand what they read;
- d. Form an understanding of what they read and extend, elaborate, and critically judge its meaning;
- e. Use a variety of effective strategies to aid their understanding and to plan, manage, and check the progress of their reading;*
- f. Can read a wide variety of texts and can read for different purposes."

*See Effective Communication, Performance Outcome 5 (page 2 of this framework) for a listing of strategies which includes phonics, structural analysis, and vocabulary.

Performance Indicators

Follow written directions

Select words, phrases, or sentences to describe a picture

Interpret written clues to identify an object

Determine what the text is about

Locate and identify facts from informational paragraphs, stories, and news articles

Connect material to personal experiences

Search for, locate, and organize information

Analyze and integrate material

Recognize paraphrases of a text

Summarize a text

Reach generalizations about main ideas

Make appropriate generalizations about a text

Explain an author's intent

React to and explain a text as a whole

Describe similarities and differences in characters

Combine ideas

Make inferences

Use information to draw a conclusion

Extend and restructure ideas presented

Understand the links between ideas

Synthesize and learn from specialized reading materials

Writing/Talking Proficiency

Proficient writing and talking is both having something to say and communicating it effectively in written or spoken language. The National Assessment of Educational Progress *Writing Objectives: 1988 Assessment* (page 7) lists four characteristics of good writers.

- a. Students use writing to accomplish a variety of purposes.
- b. Students manage the writing process.
- c. Students control the forms of written language.
- d. Students value writing and what has been written.

Performance Indicators

Establish and maintain purpose

Communicate with the audience

Show evidence of voice (attitude toward and portrayal of self) and/or appropriate tone
(attitude toward subject, audience, characters, etc.)

Show evidence of analysis, reflection, and insight

Provide thoughtful, detailed support to develop the main idea(s)

Elaborate with descriptive, supportive details

Demonstrate appropriate organizational patterns

Display coherence

Use transitions

Employ organizational signals

Use sentences that are complete and grammatically correct

Vary sentence structure and length

Construct sentences effectively

Exhibit correct and effective word choice and usage

Show precision and/or richness of language

Demonstrate conventions in writing (correct spelling, punctuation, and capitalization)

Use conventions in talking (clear articulation, effective volume, pitch, and inflection)

Use nonverbal actions to increase clarity or reinforce the verbal message

Listening/Viewing Proficiency

Students who are good at listening and viewing understand messages communicated in other than written forms.

Performance Indicators

Demonstrate understanding of the information

Give an account, with or without prompting, of the information presented in person,
or by a videotape or audiotape

Use information which has been presented both orally and visually

Go beyond the presentation by making inferences or drawing conclusions

Explain a major concept from the presentation spontaneously or with prompting

Use the language of the presentation to discuss information

Use quotes and paraphrases from the presentation

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